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ABSTRACT

A task force of Tennessee legislators, educators, and others directed a study that had as its objective to develop a long-range plan for all of the state's educational levels. Recommendations of this task force are compared, side-by-side, with the recommendations found in the federal report "A Nation At Risk." Under the broad headings of content, standards and expectations, time, teaching, and leadership and fiscal support are the detailed recommendations from the Tennessee study. These specify statewide goals: curriculum requirements; teacher training and certification; and the responsibilities of the State Board of Education, local school districts, and the state government. (MLF)

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TENNESSEE COMPREHENSIVE EDUCATION STUDY:
SUMMARY AND COMPARISON WITH A NATION AT RISK

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EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION

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THE TENNESSEE COMPREHENSIVE EDUCATION STUDY (TCES)*

Introduction:

Education is a state function and periodically each state should review what it is doing, determine what should be done, and develop a plan to guide education in years to come. It had been 25 years since Tennessee had conducted a comprehensive study of education and the study was long overdue. Tennessee's Ninety-Second General Assembly passed Senate Joint Resolution No. 56 to create a task force to make a comprehensive study of public education. Results were reported to the General Assembly and Governor by January 1, 1983. Previous similar studies were authorized in 1933, 1945, and 1955.

Goal/Objectives:

The major goal was to develop a long-range plan for Tennessee Education, K-postgraduate. Areas of examination included educational goals, governance, instructional quality and distribution of funds. The study objectives were to:

- 1) accomplish an educational economic and financial forecast
- 2) review the education statutes in the Tennessee Code Annotated
- 3) determine educational goals for all levels of Tennessee public education
- 4) examine the governance and organizational structures of the total educational system
- 5) conduct a statewide assessment of public education
- 6) review the present procedures in distribution of funds to each level of public education

Methods/Data Sources:

A structure was set up for the study. The study was guided by a Task Force of legislators, educators, representatives of agencies, parents, etc. The Task Force was subdivided into committees, including a Coordinating Committee and Committees for various foci of the study. An Executive Director was selected by a search committee and a staff was employed for planning, research and writing purposes. Portions of the study were contracted with outside agencies and consultants were appointed to help with segments of the study. The Staff used the following techniques to gather the needed information:

- 1) a research of the literature
- 2) a review of recent studies done by cooperating state agencies
- 3) testimony from resource persons who appeared before various subcommittees
- 4) open public hearings
- 5) contractual agreements for research work to be done by qualified impartial experts
- 6) a review of standardized test results
- 7) statewide surveys (Four separate surveys)

Results/Significance:

Included in the findings, educational goals were identified to give each educational component of Tennessee public education direction for the future. Changes in the educational governance structure were recommended and numerous recommendations to attempt to improve educational quality were formulated. Several revisions in the present system of fund distribution for public education were recommended.

Several study recommendations have been implemented by the various governing boards, and a specific governance change affecting post-secondary vocational-technical education was passed by the Ninety-Third General Assembly and signed into law by the Governor. The Governor based much of his Better Schools Program (including the Master Teacher incentive pay plan) on the study. A comparison of the Tennessee Comprehensive Education Study recommendations with the recommendations found in "A Nation at Risk" appear on the following pages.

NATIONAL COMMISSION ON EXCELLENCE/TENNESSEE COMPREHENSIVE EDUCATION STUDY: A COMPARISON

Goals of Public Education, K-12
National Commission on Excellence

Part of what is at risk is the promise first made on this continent: All, regardless of race or class or economic status, are entitled to a fair chance and to the tools for developing their individual powers of mind and spirit to the utmost. This promise means that all children by virtue of their own efforts, competently guided, can hope to attain the mature and informed judgment needed to secure gainful employment and to manage their own lives, thereby serving not only their own interests but also the progress of society itself (Nation at Risk, p. 8).

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1. Statewide Goals. The State Board of Education should adopt the following twelve (12) goals as the "Goals of Education, Kindergarten through Grade Twelve." These goals should replace the ten (10) goals presently established by the State Board.

A. Academic Goals

Every Person Should:

- Develop skills in reading, writing, speaking, and listening.
- Develop skills and attitudes which facilitate learning.
- Have competence in the fundamentals of mathematical concepts, principles, and skills.
- Gain a general education.

B. Personal Goals

Every Person Should:

- Develop pride in work and a feeling of self-worth.
- Develop good character and self-respect.
- Know the principles, habits, and attitudes conducive to good physical and mental health.
- Have sufficient information to realize his/her life goals.

C. Social and Civic Goals

Every Person Should:

- Know and practice the basic requirements of responsible citizenship.
- Establish and maintain satisfactory relationships with other persons.
- Understand and practice democratic ideas and ideals.
- Develop skills to enter the world of work.

2. Local Goal Setting. Each local board of education should set specific educational goals for its school system within the context of the goals established by the State Board of Education.
3. Progress Toward Goals. A system for evaluating each school system's progress toward achieving state and locally established goals should be devised by the State Department of Education and such evaluation should be required periodically by the State Board of Education.

Goals of Public Education, K-12 (continued)
National Commission on Excellence

Tennessee Comprehensive Education Study

4. Goals of Vocational-Technical Education

- A. Develop in students pride in work, a sense of accomplishment, and a feeling of self-worth from a task well done.
- B. Promote new industry and business throughout the state of Tennessee by providing skilled labor.
- C. Promote trade, technical, or business related employment for all graduates of vocational-technical programs.
- D. Develop the occupational awareness and decision making skills of students at all levels of vocational-technical instruction.
- E. Improve the composition of the labor pool throughout the state by providing training opportunities in specified areas of need.
- F. Complement the goals of all education, including meeting needs of the handicapped and economically disadvantaged, in that through employment the quality of life improves.
- G. Promote student mastery of basic skill development in the areas of reading, communications, and mathematics.
- H. Provide vocational-technical education at whatever life stage the occupational training is needed.

Recommendation A: Content

We recommend that State and local high school graduation requirements be strengthened and that, at a minimum, all students seeking a diploma be required to lay the foundations in the Five New Basics by taking the following curriculum during their 4 years of high school: (a) 4 years of English; (b) 3 years of mathematics; (c) 3 years of science; (d) 3 years of social studies; and (e) one-half year of computer science. For the college-bound, 2 years of foreign language in high school are strongly recommended in addition to those taken earlier (p. 24).

Regular Academic

- 1. The State Board of Education should increase the present graduation requirements to include one (1) additional unit in Mathematics, one (1) additional unit in Science, and one-half (½) additional unit in Social Studies.
- 2. A. Computer literacy should be included in the high school curriculum as an elective. (Short-Term)
- B. Computer literacy should be included in the high school curriculum as a requirement. (Long-Term)

The high school curriculum should also provide students with programs requiring rigorous effort in subjects that advance students' personal, educational, and occupational goals, such as the fine and performing arts and vocational education. These areas complement the New Basics, and they should demand the same level of performance as the Basics (p. 26).

The curriculum in the crucial eight grades leading to the high school years should be specifically designed to provide a sound base for study in those and later years in such areas as English language development and writing, computational and problem solving skills, science, social studies, foreign language, and the arts. These years should foster an enthusiasm for learning and the development of the individual's gifts and talents. (pp. 26-27)

Tennessee Comprehensive Education Study

3. The State Board of Education should continue to examine curriculum requirements for all grades, including time requirements for Language Arts and Mathematics in Grades 1 through 8.
4. Curriculum requirements should include formal reading instruction in Grades 7 and 8.

Vocational Education

1. LEA's should be required to review all curriculum offerings in Grades 9 through 12 including vocational courses and eliminate courses that are outdated and not relevant to the future demands of society.
2. The State Department of Education and LEA's through a cooperative effort should establish more flexible guidelines to allow students to take one-hour, two-hour, or three-hour vocational courses with scheduling consideration given to the junior and senior years.
3. Instructional planners and administrators need to constantly develop relationships and contact with industry and business to make sure that the sequence of job skills taught in their programs is appropriate (p. 473).
4. Based on a set of predetermined standards established by the governing board, nonproductive programs should be terminated and replaced with productive ones. Governing boards should leave the responsibility of program justification to the local institutions. No programs should be automatically continued (p. 473).

Special Education

1. All LEA's should place more emphasis on programs for gifted students, and should consider using Chapter II funds where possible for such programs.
2. Tennessee special education programs should fulfill the following functions:
 - A. Should teach students with handicapping conditions the skills necessary to participate more independently and more effectively in family and community life.
 - B. Should encourage handicapped students to participate actively in normal school functions and should foster among all students an increased awareness of and appreciation for "differentness" in whatever form.
 - C. Should incorporate the family in making decisions about and carrying out educational programs for students with handicapping conditions.

Recommendation A: Content (continued)
National Commission on Excellence

Tennessee Comprehensive Education Study

- D. Should encourage the building of an effective cadre of professionals and paraprofessionals who can meet the educational needs of students with special learning problems.
- E. Should work in close conjunction with regular education programs and should include a range of placement options for those students whose needs require more specialized attention than regular teachers can provide in full-time regular classrooms.
- F. Should encourage the active participation of the community in services for students with handicapping conditions.
- 3. The State Board of Education and the State Department of Education should investigate the possibility of establishing a state school for the gifted and talented to encompass all subjects. (Long-Term)

Recommendation B: Standards and Expectations

We recommend that schools, colleges, and universities adopt more rigorous and measurable standards, and higher expectations, for academic performance and student conduct; and that 4-year colleges and universities raise their requirements for admission. This will help students do their best educationally with challenging materials in an environment that supports learning and authentic accomplishment.

- 1. Grades should be indicators of academic achievement so they can be relied on as evidence of a student's readiness for further study.
- 2. Four-year colleges and universities should raise their standards for admissions. . . .
- 3. Standardized tests of achievement (not to be confused with aptitude tests) should be administered at major transition points from one level of schooling to another and particularly from high school to college or work. . . . The tests should be administered as part of a nationwide (but not Federal) system of State and local standardized tests (p. 27).

- 1. LEA's should place primary emphasis on achieving basic skills in Grades 1-8, by outlining minimum specific objectives and skills to be mastered at each grade level before promotion to the next.
- 2. A statewide testing program using norm-referenced national achievement tests should be established for all students in one (1) of the primary grades and in one (1) of the intermediate grades.
- 3. The State Board should develop within a two-year period a Basic Skills Certificate which students shall attain before entering high school. Such a certificate will be awarded when a student demonstrates an acceptable level of proficiency on a statewide Basic Skills Examination. Such a test should replace the State Minimum Proficiency Test.
- 4. The State Textbook Commission should consider reducing at the state level the number of books for adoption by local systems.
- 5. The textbook adoption cycle at the state level should begin earlier than July to allow adequate time for review of all books.
- 6. If the State Textbook List is reduced at the state level, it should include in Grades 1-8 at least two textbooks below grade level in each subject, and at least two textbooks above grade level.

Recommendation B: Standards and Expectations (continued)
National Commission on Excellence

4. Textbooks and other tools of learning and teaching should be upgraded and updated to assure more rigorous content. We call upon university scientists, scholars, and members of professional societies, in collaboration, with master teachers, to help in this task, as they did in the post-Sputnik area. . . .
5. In considering textbooks for adoption, states and school districts should:
 - A. Evaluate texts and other materials on their ability to present rigorous and challenging material clearly; and
 - B. Require publishers to furnish evaluation data on the material's effectiveness.
6. Because no textbook in any subject can be geared to the needs of all students, funds should be made available to support text development in "thin-market" areas, such as those for disadvantaged students, the learning disabled, and the gifted and talented.
7. To assure quality, all publishers should furnish evidence of the quality and appropriateness of textbooks, based on results from field trials and credible evaluations. . . .
8. New instructional materials should reflect the most current applications of technology in appropriate curriculum areas, the best scholarship in each discipline, and research in learning and teaching (pp. 28-29).

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7. State and local school officials should let publishers know what kinds of books they want (content, reading level, etc.).
8. An arithmetic textbook should be required for adoption in Grades 1 and 2.
9. LEA's should be encouraged to adopt and use at least one textbook in each subject at grade reading level in all grades.
10. Careful study by the State Department of Education should be given to ensure adequate instructional materials for each classroom.
11. LEA's should be encouraged to retain textbooks if they are usable and appropriate beyond the five-year adoption cycle provided such textbooks are on the state approved textbook list.
12. A panel of expert teachers in each subject area should be chosen to advise Textbook Commission members on book selections. The teachers selected will receive the same reimbursement as Textbook Commission members.
13. The State Department of Education should assume a leadership role in:
 - A. Developing lists of available software, computer resource people, and effective computer-utilization locations for LEA's.
 - B. Developing models for inservice training for teachers in computer usage for both computer-assisted and computer-managed instruction.
 - C. Investigating the potential of microcomputers for usage by small school systems for instruction in courses where qualified teachers are not available.
14. LEA's should assure adequate inservice training in computer usage for office staff and for all teaching personnel before computer literacy, computer-assisted, and computer-managed instruction are attempted.
15. LEA's, where possible, should exchange effective software.
16. The use of microcomputers for computer-assisted instruction for remedial purposes and for high achievers should be stressed where facilities are limited.
17. Students enrolling in vocational-technical programs should be given pretests and post-tests in order to measure competencies gained. Each student should be made aware of the specific skills and competencies he/she should possess at the end of training.

Recommendation B: Standards and Expectations (continued)
National Commission on Excellence

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18. The appropriate governing board should develop a vocational-technical evaluation system. Emphasis should be placed on helping instructors, curriculum coordinators, and policy makers establish criteria by which to measure program effectiveness.
19. In determining the quality of vocational-technical programs, several indicators and measurements should be utilized.

Recommendation C: Time

We recommend that significantly more time be devoted to learning the New Basics. This will require more effective use of the existing school day, a longer school day, or a lengthened school year.

1. Students in high school should be assigned far more homework than is now the case.
2. Instruction in effective study and work skills, which are essential if school and independent time is to be used efficiently, should be introduced in the early grades and continued throughout the student's schooling.
3. School districts and State legislatures should strongly consider 7-hour school days, as well as a 200- to 220-day school year.
4. The time available for learning should be expanded through better classroom management and organization of the school day. If necessary, additional time should be found to meet the special needs of slow learners, the gifted, and others who need more instructional diversity than can be accommodated during a conventional school day or school year.
5. The burden on teachers for maintaining discipline should be reduced through the development of firm and fair codes of student conduct that are enforced consistently, and by considering alternative classrooms, programs, and schools to meet the needs of continually disruptive students.

1. LEA's should arrange student school schedules so that 80-90 percent of the school day is spent on classroom instruction in Grades 1-6; and 85-95 percent of the day is spent on classroom instruction in Grades 7-12.

2. Any curriculum revisions for Grades 1-8 should allow for the following amount of time to be spent on these subjects:

Language Arts

Grades 1-3, 15 hours per week

Grades 4-8, 10 hours per week

Mathematics

Grades 1-3, at least 5 hours per week

Grades 4-8, 5 hours per week.

3. Tennessee's compulsory attendance age should remain "between the ages of seven (7) and sixteen (16) years, both inclusive" (T.C.A. 49-1708).
4. It is not recommended that a statewide opening date for all schools be mandated, but the administrators of each LEA are strongly urged to consider the wishes of the parents and teachers in their district in establishing opening and closing dates for their schools.
5. School administrators (boards, superintendents, and principals) should investigate all possible scheduling arrangements to provide every teacher at least one period for class preparation within the present school day. If possible, this should be done by hiring where necessary additional appropriately certificated staff for P.E., art, music, etc. Cooperation among teachers in effecting this should be explored and possible usage of qualified community members.
6. As soon as it is possible to provide the additional state and local funding needed, kindergarten attendance should be mandatory.
7. If kindergarten attendance becomes mandatory, the entrance age should be changed from "five (5) years of age on or before October 31 of the current kindergarten term" to "five (5) years of age on or before September 30th of the current kindergarten term"

Recommendation C: Time (continued)National Commission on Excellence

6. Attendance policies with clear incentives and sanctions should be used to reduce the amount of time lost through student absenteeism and tardiness.
7. Administrative burdens on the teacher and related intrusions into the school day should be reduced to add time for teaching and learning.
8. Placement and grouping of students, as well as promotion and graduation policies, should be guided by the academic progress of students and their instructional needs, rather than by rigid adherence to ages (pp. 29-30).

Recommendation D: Teaching

1. Persons preparing to teach should be required to meet high educational standards, to demonstrate an aptitude for teaching and to demonstrate competence in an academic discipline. Colleges and universities should be judged by how well their graduates meet these criteria.

Tennessee Comprehensive Education Study

- (T.C.A. 49-2305(c)). This change would bring the required kindergarten entrance age in line with the required entrance age (6 on or before September 30th) for the first grade (T.C.A. 49-1702).
8. Students who have dropped out of high school and are age seventeen (17) or older should be allowed to enroll in postsecondary non-baccalaureate institutions if they meet the minimum admission requirements as established by the appropriate governing board.

1. All teacher preparation institutions in the state and the Division of Certification in the Department of Education should review teacher preparation programs in regard to:
 - A. The amount of field experience students receive in college.
 - B. The amount of subject area content required.
 - C. The possibility of combining specialty areas in teacher preparation programs with graduates being prepared to teach in more than one area.
2. Admission requirements to teacher preparation programs are to include requiring a grade point average of 2.5 on a 4.0 scale for the first two years of undergraduate work and the achievement of a passing score on Form 19 of the California Achievement Test, which is to be supplemented by requiring a written composition.
3. The professional core should provide additional exposure to a variety of field-based classroom experiences.
4. The appropriate governing boards should establish ongoing evaluations of teacher education programs.
5. The appropriate governing boards should assess the need for and the quality and productivity of all teacher preparation programs and specialties, eliminating unnecessary duplication.

Recommendation D: Teaching (continued)National Commission on ExcellenceTennessee Comprehensive Education Study

6. Upon completion of the professional core, students should pass the Specialty Area Exam of the National Teachers' Exam, where available for a state developed test, to demonstrate their command or knowledge essential to teaching in their certification area, as well as passing the Core Battery.
7. The State Board of Education should review present certification requirements in regard to the number of credit hours required for certification in specific subject areas (in particular, in reading for elementary teachers, and in all subject areas for secondary teachers), and should increase requirements as needed to bring Tennessee's certification requirements in line with other SREB states.
8. The State Board of Education should consider requiring an apprenticeship program for beginning teachers prior to professional certification. During such a period, the apprentice-teacher would be closely supervised and evaluated by a "master teacher."
9. The State Board of Education shall continue to use the National Teacher Common and Areas Exams (where available) or a state-developed test in testing persons seeking initial certification to teach.

Vocational Education Instructors

1. Preservice and inservice for counselors should include instruction in technical curriculum development, career education, employment practices, and experiences in business and industry should be made a part of either preservice or inservice requirements.
2. Where possible, vocational-technical instructors should be given competency based skill testing before employment.
3. Counselors and administrators should pursue training in labor market data collection, analysis, and dissemination.
4. Teacher education institutions should have clearly established goals, objectives, and practices relative to vocational-technical education on the undergraduate and graduate level.
5. Vocational-technical teacher educators should be knowledgeable in the "state of the art" and new and changing technology.
6. Placement personnel in any institution offering vocational-technical instruction should have strong business/industrial experience.

Recommendation D: Teaching
National Commission on Excellence

Tennessee Comprehensive Education Study

2. Salaries for the teaching profession should be increased and should be professionally competitive, market-sensitive, and performance-based. Salary, promotion, tenure, and retention decisions should be tied to an effective evaluation system that includes peer review so that superior teachers can be rewarded, average ones encouraged, and poor ones either improved or terminated.

3. School boards should adopt an 11-month contract for teachers. This would ensure time for curriculum and professional development, programs for students with special needs, and a more adequate level of teacher compensation.

7. There is a serious lack of technical education instructional personnel. Comprehensive state-wide planning for staff development for technical educators and alternative methods for training need to be developed. This training should emphasize teaching skills for new instructors and technological update for current instructors.

1. The state should set as a long-range goal raising the level of the average teacher's salary in Tennessee to the average teacher's salary of the states belonging to the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB).
2. The State Board of Education should consider extending the experience factor in the State Minimum Salary Schedule beyond the present fifteen years for teachers and sixteen years for superintendents to include three longevity increments to be earned after 20, 25, and 30 years service.
3. The State Board of Education should consider increasing the add-on factor for principals' salaries.
4. The State Board of Education and LEA's should investigate ways of rewarding outstanding teachers (as determined by fair and impartial evaluation) over and beyond their set salaries.
5. The State Board of Education should develop a plan for providing salary supplements for mathematics and science teachers.
6. Uniform evaluation instruments should be developed at the state level for all certificated personnel and required for usage by LEA's.
7. In developing or providing such an instrument, the State Department should utilize current research on evaluative techniques and statewide practices.
8. LEA's should be encouraged to use evaluation procedures for the primary purpose of staff development and improvement.
9. If possible, evaluation of school personnel should be performed at the school building level and not by system-wide personnel.

1. The State Department of Education should establish inservice training models for LEA's including, but not limited to, the following areas:
 - A. Effective teaching techniques and methods for different types of students.
 - B. Classroom management techniques.

Recommendation D: Teaching (continued)
National Commission on Excellence

Tennessee Comprehensive Education Study

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| <p>4. School boards, administrators, and teachers should cooperate to develop career ladders for teachers that distinguish among the beginning instructor, the experienced teacher, and the master teacher.</p> <p>5. Substantial nonschool personnel resources should be employed to help solve the immediate problem of the shortage of mathematics and science teachers. Qualified individuals including recent graduates with mathematics and science degrees, graduate students, and industrial and retired scientists</p> | <p>C. Positive attitudes of teachers toward all students' ability to learn.</p> <p>D. Training principals and other staff members to be instructional leaders.</p> <p>E. Emphasis on basic skills.</p> <p>F. Computer usage.</p> <p>G. Evaluative procedures for principals and other administrators.</p> <p>H. Mainstreaming of handicapped students.</p> <p>2. The State Department of Education should set guidelines for inservice education that:</p> <p>A. Provide for input from teachers as to needs, goals, and activities.</p> <p>B. Place teachers in an active role.</p> <p>C. Are school-based.</p> <p>D. Provide opportunities for teachers to share and provide assistance to each other.</p> <p>E. Are coordinated with goals set by individual schools and school systems.</p> <p>F. Provide for evaluation of inservice activities in regard to staff development and future planning.</p> <p>3. The State Department of Education should require that a substantial amount of time in teacher inservice education be devoted to updating expertise in subject matter areas.</p> <p>The appropriate educational boards should encourage local schools to establish the rank of "Lead Teacher" to act as a mentor for new and student teachers.</p> <p>Certification requirements should be established to accommodate teachers in related surplus fields by issuing temporary endorsements to teach mathematics and science with the understanding that a specified number of refresher courses would be taken within a year.</p> |
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Recommendation D: Teaching (continued)**National Commission on Excellence**

could, with appropriate preparation, immediately begin teaching in these fields. A number of our leading science centers have the capacity to begin educating and retraining teachers immediately. Other areas of critical teacher need, such as English, must also be addressed.

Recommendation E: Leadership and Fiscal Support

We recommend that citizens across the Nation hold educators and elected officials responsible for providing the leadership necessary to achieve these reforms, and that citizens provide the fiscal support and stability required to bring about the reforms we propose.

1. Principals and superintendents must play a crucial leadership role in developing school and community support for the reforms we propose, and school boards must provide them with the professional development and other support required to carry out their leadership role effectively. The Commission stresses the distinction between leadership skills involving persuasion, setting goals and developing community consensus behind them, and managerial and supervisory skills. Although the latter are necessary, we believe that school boards must consciously develop leadership skills at the school and district levels if the reforms we propose are to be achieved.

Tennessee Comprehensive Education Study

2. Teacher education personnel should work with local lead teachers to provide inservice programs that enhance current teachers' skills.
3. As the lead teacher concept is implemented, new teachers would be certified only after demonstrating their teaching competence during a year's internship with a lead teacher.

1. The General Assembly should review all sections of the Tennessee Code Annotated pertaining to membership on local boards of education in light of enacting a general provision to provide for determining an appropriate number of members for local boards of education within the range of five (5) to twelve (12) members.
2. The General Assembly should investigate the possibility of enacting legislation to provide for uniform lengths of terms not to exceed six (6) years for elected local board members and for staggered terms statewide.
3. The General Assembly should consider amending the Tennessee Code Annotated by changing the office of county superintendent from its present status as a county office and providing for the selection of a county superintendent by three methods: the county commission, election by the people in the school district, or selection by the local school board.
4. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 49-222 should be amended to allow the State Board of Education to set standards for the certification requirements for superintendents which exceed the minimum standards established by statute, provided any additional requirements would not apply to superintendents presently certified under T.C.A. 49-222.
5. Small school districts should be reviewed in light of their cost effectiveness with the idea of possibly tightening further the limitations on the creation of new school districts and the number of school districts presently allowed within counties.
6. School districts are urged wherever possible to keep the grade spread of their schools in conformity with the definitions of schools found in the Code.
7. Serious consideration should be given by school districts, wherever possible, to establishing schools with several consecutive grades, i.e., more than one or two grades per school. More parental and community support is found for schools that children can attend for more than one year; also, more continuity is possible in instruction and less adjustment each year is needed for students.
8. All local education agencies should be encouraged to assume a leadership role in formulating community advisory councils.

Recommendation E: Leadership and Fiscal Support (continued)
National Commission on Excellence

12.

2. State and local officials, including school board members, governors, and legislators, have the primary responsibility for financing and governing the schools, and should incorporate the reforms we propose in their educational policies and fiscal planning.

Tennessee Comprehensive Education Study

9. The State Department of Education should provide increased assistance to LEA's in planning and developing community education programs.
 10. The State Department of Education should encourage local boards of education to develop plans for the utilization or disposal of surplus buildings or space based on enrollment projections.
 11. Local school boards should work with other community agencies in developing plans for under-utilized facilities.
 12. An effective computerized program cost accounting system should be installed at the school district level to provide accurate and timely school and school district data needed by the school districts and by the state. Such a system is fundamental for determining fiscal requirements for meeting educational program needs, allocating the necessary funds, monitoring program implementation, evaluating the results, and planning improvements.
1. The Commissioner and the State Board of Education should continue to have the responsibility for the governance and administration of all programs directly or indirectly related to kindergarten through grade 12.
 2. The present method of selection for State Board of Education members and the Commissioner of Education shall be continued.
 3. It is recommended that the General Assembly examine the length of terms for all state coordinating/governing boards of public education, including the State Board of Education, the State Board of Regents, the University of Tennessee Board of Trustees, and the Tennessee Higher Education Commission, to consider establishing six-year terms on a staggered basis for all such boards.
 4. The Commissioner should continue to serve as the administrative officer of the Department of Education, and the State Board of Education should continue to function as the policymaking body in regard to rules, regulations, and minimum standards for the Department of Education.
 5. The primary functions of the State Department of Education shall include:
 - A. Advisory capacity to local education agencies.
 - B. Program evaluation and research.
 - C. Leadership for local education agencies.

Recommendation E: Leadership and Fiscal Support (continued)

National Commission on Excellence

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- D. Regulatory agent for local education agencies.
- E. Monitoring agent for local education agencies.
- 6. In order to advise local systems and to carry out its leadership role, the Department of Education should establish a data bank and clearinghouse for information and all research projects. Such a division should be responsible for the coordination of all data collection and data processing activities in the Department; should serve as a liaison between the Divisions; should disseminate information upon request to the public and the General Assembly; and should work toward improving the public image of education in the state.
- 7. All Divisions of the Department should work together more closely in coordinating activities and sharing information.
- 8. The state should renew, update, and publish each year a comprehensive review and analysis: of the costs of education programs defined, mandated, or funded by the state; of public school finance trends; and of major problems and issues in financing the public schools, their underlying causes, and alternatives for their solution. This information is vital for those who make policy and other decisions about financing the public schools.
- 9. The State Department of Education should continue its reorganization of the school approval process with the elimination of as much paper work as possible.
- 10. School approval should become more meaningful and a viable means of improving the quality of schools by requiring each LEA to assess its progress toward established goals. Such progress should be monitored by the state every three years.
- 11. Forms required to be completed by LEA's should be reduced where possible, and duplication of information on required forms for LEA's should be eliminated.
- 12. The procedure of issuing waivers particularly for oversize classes should be reviewed carefully. A redefinition of class size requirements utilizing average size classes within a school setting should be considered. All classes over the state mandated size will be reported as in the past.
- 13. Nonpublic schools should be defined in terms of organization (i.e., number of students, number of teachers, etc.) and such a definition should be included in the Code.
- 14. Serious consideration should be given to requiring that all elementary and secondary non-public schools be approved by the Commissioner and the State Board of Education.

Recommendation E: Leadership and Fiscal Support (continued)
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15. The governance of the four State Special Schools (Tennessee Preparatory School, Tennessee School for the Deaf, Tennessee School for the Blind, and Alvin C. York Institute) should remain under the jurisdiction of the State Board of Education at the present. As soon as it is feasible, the State Board of Education, the State Department of Education, and the General Assembly should investigate the various problems at each school and develop recommendations for improving programs and conditions at the Special Schools.
16. Specific provisions for meeting the costs of maintenance and operation of school plants should be provided on a per pupil ADA basis or on a categorical funding basis within the TFP.
17. The textbook allocation should be brought within the foundation program since it is closely related to other teaching materials and instructional programs now in the TFP, provided there is no reduction in the dollar amount per pupil.
18. Longstanding guarantee provisions in the foundation program for operational or pupil transportation funds should be phased out within a five-year period. Guarantee funds for capital outlay should be phased out within a five-year period or the life of existing bonds for which such revenue has been pledged.
19. The measure of the relative taxpaying ability of Tennessee counties used in the foundation program to determine each county's local contribution to the TFP is inaccurate and should be replaced for the 1983-84 school year.
20. The State Board for Secondary Vocational Education should remain the sole board responsible for the distribution of federal funds.
21. Because of tightening economic conditions and the need for greater accountability, vocational-technical governing boards should assume more of a role in quality control and evaluation.
22. Although there has been constant growth in federal funds to the state since 1972, during the last five years a steady decline in real dollar value has occurred. The General Assembly and governing boards should be aware of this and stand ready to explore alternative funding sources for vocational education to replace the lost federal dollars.
23. The State Board for Vocational Education should increase its efforts in seeing that districts or counties with limited fiscal capacity receive a large enough share of federal funds to significantly improve their ability to provide programs of high quality.

Recommendation E: Leadership and Fiscal Support (continued)

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3. The Federal Government, in cooperation with States and localities, should help meet the needs of key groups of students such as the gifted and talented, the socioeconomically disadvantaged, minority and language minority students, and the handicapped. In combination these groups include both national resources and the Nation's youth who are most at risk.

Tennessee Comprehensive Education Study

1. The Division for Education of the Handicapped and other agencies involved in the administration of special education programs should work toward developing a truly comprehensive and coordinated system of educational services for students with handicapping conditions by investigating the following areas:
 - A. Effective coordination of educational programs. The possibility of organizing under the umbrella of the Division of Education of the Handicapped all educational programs for students with handicapping conditions should be investigated.
 - B. Effective coordination of educational and noneducational programs. Agencies providing services to handicapped students should find ways of more efficiently coordinating educational and noneducational services to provide maximum benefits for students and the community.
 - C. Funding. Particular attention should be paid to how funds appropriated for special education are actually spent. The fact that no funds are appropriated for new buildings and/or renovations should be studied.
 - D. Parent and community involvement. Ways need to be found to involve parents and interested members of the community in more policymaking and evaluation activities.
 - E. Inservice training models. Development of more effective inservice training models should be carefully considered.
 - F. Program evaluation. Much work needs to be done in evaluating the long-range effectiveness of various programs and teaching methods.
 - G. Quality concerns. Administrators need to seek ways to move from compliance issues to quality issues. Minimum standards should be developed, and incentives could be offered for quality programs and quality performance by program personnel.
2. A program accounting system should be established to provide needed data on the expenditure of handicapped funds for identified and served intellectually gifted students.
3. The pupil weightings used in the foundation program in allocating funds among programs should be continuously monitored to keep them accurate and fair. The single add-on weighting used for the additional costs for the education of children with handicapping conditions should be replaced with weightings that accurately reflect the costs for services for the various handicapping conditions.

Recommendation E: Leadership and Fiscal Support (continued)

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4. In addition, we believe the Federal Government's role includes several functions of national consequence that States and localities alone are unlikely to be able to meet: protecting constitutional and civil rights for students and school personnel; collecting data, statistics, and information about education generally; supporting curriculum improvement and research on teaching, learning, and the management of schools; supporting teacher training in areas of critical shortage or key national needs; and providing student financial assistance and research and graduate training. We believe the assistance of the Federal Government should be provided with a minimum of administrative burden and intrusiveness.
5. The Federal Government has the primary responsibility to identify the national interest in education. It should also help fund and support efforts to protect and promote that interest. It must provide the national leadership to ensure that the Nation's public and private resources are marshaled to address the issues discussed in this report.
6. This Commission calls upon educators, parents, and public officials at all levels to assist in bringing about the educational reform proposed in this report. We also call upon citizens to provide the financial support necessary to accomplish these purposes. Excellence costs. But in the long run mediocrity costs far more.

Tennessee Comprehensive Education Study

In long-range planning for financing the public schools, the state should plan for the replacement of funds for present federal programs of proven quality and success if the federal government should further drastically reduce or discontinue its funding for these programs.

The General Assembly should establish a goal of funding in the foundation program the full necessary costs of all basic programs in the public schools, kindergarten through grade 12. The state should do the necessary planning and make the needed financial arrangements to accomplish this goal. The state should plan for and establish an improved tax base for the public schools that is equitable, progressive, and responsive to economic growth and will produce the revenue to fully fund on an equalization basis the programs considered necessary and desirable in the public schools, kindergarten through grade 12. The Governor and the General Assembly should appoint a task force composed of legislators and leading citizens to develop an action plan for the implementation of this recommendation within a three-year period.